

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Disclosed are isolated polynucleotides encoding an omega-3 desaturase and a delta-12 desaturase, the enzymes encoded by the isolated polynucleotides, vectors containing the isolated polynucleotides, transgenic hosts that contain the isolated polynucleotides that express the enzymes encoded thereby, methods for producing the desaturase enzymes, and method of using the enzymes to make polyunsaturated fatty acids. The isolated polynucleotides are derived from a fungus, *Saprolegnia diclina* (ATCC 56851). In particular, omega-3-desaturase may be utilized, for example, in the conversion of arachidonic acid (AA) to eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA). Delta-12 desaturase may be used, for example, in the conversion of oleic acid (OA) to linoleic (LA). EPA or polyunsaturated fatty acids produced therefrom may be added to pharmaceutical compositions, nutritional compositions, animal feeds, as well as other products such as cosmetics.